

*NOCTURNES, MARINES, &
CHEVALET PIECES.*



J. MCNEILL WHISTLER,

CHELSEA.

1892

From the Library of
Frank Simpson

NOCTURNES,
MARINES, & CHEVALET PIECES.

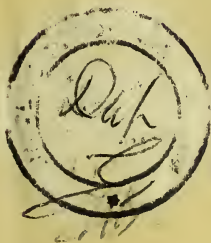
SMALL COLLECTION

KINDLY LENT

by

THEIR OWNERS.

[Held at the Grosvenor Gallery,
March, 1892]





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2015

<https://archive.org/details/nocturnesmarines00whis>

“THE VOICE OF A PEOPLE”

"I do not know when so much amusement has been afforded to the British public as by Mr. Whistler's pictures."

—*Speech of the Attorney-General of England.*

Westminster, Nov. 16, 1878.

I.—NOCTURNE

GREY AND SILVER—CHELSEA EMBANKMENT—WINTER

Lent by J. G. Orchar, Esq.

With the exception, perhaps, of one of Mr. Whistler's meaningless canvasses, there is nothing that is actually provocative of undue mirth or ridicule.

City Press.

In some of the Nocturnes the absence, not only of definition, but of gradation, would point to the conclusion that they are but engaging sketches. In them we look in vain for all the delicate differences of light and hue which the scenes depicted present.

F. Wedmore.

"Four Masters of Etching."

2.—SYMPHONY IN WHITE, No. III

Lent by Louis Huth, Esq.

It is not precisely a symphony in white—one lady has a yellowish dress and brown hair and a bit of blue ribbon, the other has a red fan, and there are flowers and green leaves. There is a girl in white on a white sofa, but even this girl has reddish hair; and of course there is the flesh colour of the complexions.

P. G. Hamerton, Saturday Review.

Mr. Whistler appears as eccentrically as ever. . . . Art is not served by freaks of resentment. . . . We hold him deeply to blame that these figures are badly drawn.

. . . . "Taste," which is mind working in Art, would, even if it could at all conceive them, utterly reject the vulgarities of Mr. Whistler with regard to form, and never be content with what suffices him in composition.

Athenæum.

Painting, or art generally, as such, with all its technicalities, difficulties, and particular ends, is nothing but a noble and expressive language, invaluable as the vehicle of thought, but by itself nothing.

*John Ruskin, Esq., Art Professor,
Modern Painters.*

3.—CHELSEA IN ICE

Lent by Madame Venturi.

We are not sure but that it would be something like insult to our readers to say more about these "things." They must surely be meant in jest; but whether the public have chiefly to thank Mr. Whistler or the Managers of the Grosvenor Gallery for playing off on them this sorry joke we do not know, nor greatly care.

*Meliora canamus!**Knowledge.*

4.—NOCTURNE

BLUE AND GOLD—OLD BATTERSEA BRIDGE

Lent by Robert H. C. Harrison, Esq.

His Nocturne in Blue and Gold, No. 3, might have been called, with a similar confusion of terms : A Farce in Moonshine, with half-a-dozen dots.

Life.

"The picture representing a night scene on Battersea Bridge has no composition and detail. A day, or a day and a half, seems a reasonable time within which to paint it. It shows no finish—it is simply a sketch."

Mr. Jones, R.A.—Evidence in Court.

Nov. 16, 1878.

5.—THE LANGE LEIZEN—OF THE SIX MARKS

PURPLE AND ROSE.

Lent by J. Leathart.

Mr. Whistler paints subjects sadly below the merit of his pencil.

The London Review.

A worse specimen of humanity than could be found on the oldest piece of china in existence.

The Reader.

The hideous forms we find in his Chinese vase painteress . . . an ostentatious slovenliness of execution . . . objects as much out of perspective as the great blue vase in the foreground, *etc., etc.*

It is Mr. Whistler's way to choose people and things for painting which other painters would turn from, and to combine these oddly chosen materials as no other painter would choose to combine them. He should learn that eccentricity is not originality, but the caricature of it.

The Times.

6.—NOCTURNE

TRAFALGAR SQUARE—SNOW

Lent by Albert Moore, Esq.

The word "impressionist" has come to have a bad meaning in art. Visions of Whistler come before you when you hear it. Such visions are not of the best possible augury, for who loves a nightmare?

Oracle.

Like the landscape art of Japan, they are harmonious decorations, and a dozen or so of such engaging sketches placed in the upper panels of a lofty apartment would afford a justifiable and welcome alternative even to noble tapestries or Morris wall-papers.

*F. Wedmore.**"Four Masters of Etching."*

7.—NOCTURNE—BLACK AND GOLD

THE FIRE WHEEL

Mr. Whistler has "a sweet little isle of his own" in the shape of an ample allowance of wall space all to himself for the display of his six most noticeable works: "Nocturnes" in black and gold, in blue and silver, "Arrangements" in black and brown, and "Harmonies" in amber and black,

These weird productions—enigmas sometimes so occult that (Edipus might be puzzled to solve them—need much subtle explanation.

The Daily Telegraph.

8.—ARRANGEMENT IN BLACK AND BROWN

THE FUR JACKET

Mr. Whistler has whole length portraits, or rather the shadows of people, shapes suggestive of good examples of portraiture when completed. They are exhibited to illustrate a theory peculiar to the artist. One is entitled An Arrangement in "Black and Brown."

The Daily Telegraph.

Mr. Whistler is anything but a robust and balanced genius.

Times.

Whistler, with three portraits which he is pleased to call "Arrangements," and which look like ghosts.

Truth.

Some figure pieces, which this artist exhibits as "harmonies" in this, that, or the other, being, as they are, mere rubs-in of colour, have no claim to be regarded as pictures.

Scotsman.

We are threatened with a Whistler exhibition. The periodical inflictions with which the gentleman tries the patience of a long suffering public generally take some fantastic form to attract attention. It is an evidence of the painter's worldly acuteness that this should be so, for public attention may be drawn by such outbursts of eccentricity to such work as would never impress sensible people on its bare merit.

Oracle.

9.—NOCTURNE

BLUE AND SILVER

Lent by Mrs. Leyland.

It seems to us a pity that an artist of Mr. Whistler's known ability should exhibit such an extraordinary collection of pictile nightmares.

Society.

Mr. Bowen: "Do you consider detail and composition essential to a work of art?"

Mr. Jones: "Most certainly I do."

Mr. Bowen: "Then what detail and composition do you find in this 'Nocturne'?"

Mr. Jones: "Absolute none."

Mr. Bowen: "Do you think two hundred guineas a large price for that picture?"

Mr. Jones: "Yes, when you think of the amount of earnest work done for a smaller sum."

*Evidence of Mr. Jones, R.A.,
Westminster, Nov. 16, 1878.*

10.—NOCTURNE.

IN BLACK AND GOLD—THE FALLING ROCKET

A dark bluish surface, with dots on it, and the faintest adumbrations of shape under the darkness, is gravely called a Nocturne in Black and Gold.

Knowledge.

His Nocturne, black and gold, "The Falling Rocket," shows such wilful and headlong perversity that one is almost disposed to despair of an artist who, in a sane moment, could send such a daub to any exhibition.

Telegraph.

For Mr. Whistler's own sake, no less than for the protection of the purchaser, Sir Coutts Lindsay ought not to have admitted works into the gallery in which the ill-educated conceit of the artist so nearly approached the aspect of wilful imposture. I have seen, and heard, much of cockney impudence before now, but never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face.

*Professor John Ruskin.
July 2, 1877.*

"The 'Nocturne in black and gold' is not a serious work to me."

*Mr. Frith, R.A.—Evidence at Westminster,
Nov. 16, 1878.*

"The 'Nocturne in black and gold,' I do not think a serious work of art."

*The Art Critic of the Times,
Evidence at Westminster,
Nov. 16, 1878.*

"The Nocturne in black and gold has not the merit of the other two pictures, and it would be impossible to

call it a serious work of art. Mr. Whistler's picture is only one of the thousand failures to paint night. The picture is not worth two hundred guineas."

Evidence of Mr. Jones, R.A.

Westminster, Nov. 16, 1878.

II.—NOCTURNE.—OPAL AND SILVER

Lent by H. Theobald, Esq.

With what feelings must we regard the mad new style, the Nocturnes in "Blue and Silver," the Harmonies in Flesh-colour and Pink, the Notes in Blue and Opal.

Knowledge.

The blue and black smudges which purport to depict the "Thames at Night."

Life.

12.—HARMONY IN GREEN AND ROSE

THE MUSIC ROOM

Lent by Madame Reveillon.

He paints in soot-colours and mud-colours, but, far from enjoying primary hues, has little or no perception of the loveliness of secondary or tertiary colour.

Merrie England.

13.—CREPUSCULE IN FLESH COLOUR AND GREEN

VALPARAISO

Lent by Graham Robertson, Esq.

Now, the best achievement of The Impressionist School, to which Mr. Whistler belongs (*sic*), is the rendering of air—not air made palpable and comparatively easy to paint, by fog—but atmosphere which is the medium of light.

Merrie England.

14.—CAPRICE IN PURPLE AND GOLD

THE GOLD SCREEN

Lent by Cyril Flower, Esq., M.P.

I take it to be admitted by those who do not conclude that Art is necessarily great which has the misfortune to be unacceptable, that it is not by his paintings so much as by his etchings that Mr. Whistler's name may aspire to live.

F. Wedmore.

15.—SYMPHONY IN GREY AND GREEN

THE OCEAN

Lent by Mrs. Peter Taylor.

In Mr. Whistler's picture, "Symphony in Grey and Green: The Ocean," the composition is ugly, the sky opaque, the suggestion of sea leaden and without light or motion.

The Times.

Mr. Whistler continues these experiments in colour which are now known as "Symphonies." It may be questioned whether these performances are to be highly valued, except as feats accomplished under needless and self-imposed restrictions—much as writing achieved by the feet of a penman who has not been deprived of the use of his hands.

The Graphic.

"We can paint a cat or a fiddle, so that they look as if we could take them up; but we cannot imitate the Ocean or the Alps. We can imitate fruit, but not a tree; flowers, but not a pasture; cut-glass, but not the rainbow."

John Ruskin, Esq., Teacher of Art.

16.—NOCTURNE

GREY AND GOLD—CHELSEA SNOW

Lent by Alfred Chapman, Esq.

Mr. Whistler sends two of his studies of moonlight, in which form is eschewed for harmonies of "Gray and Gold" and "Blue and Silver;" and which for the crowd of exhibition visitors resolve themselves into riddles or mystifications. . . . In a word, painting to Mr. Whistler is the exact correlative of music, as vague, as purely emotional, as released from all functions of representation.

He is really building up art out of his own imperfections (*sic*!) instead of setting himself to supply them.

The Times.

17.—NOCTURNE

BLUE AND SILVER—BATTERSEA REACH

Lent by W. G. Rawlinson, Esq.

J. M. Whistler is here again with his nocturnes.

Scotsman.

18.—NOCTURNE

BLUE AND SILVER—CHELSEA

Lent by W. C. Alexander, Esq.

Mr. Whistler confines himself to two small canvases of the nocturne kind. One is covered with smudgy blue and the other with dirty black.

Saturday Review.

A reputation, for a time, imperilled by original absurdity.

F. Wedmore, Academy.

I think Mr. Wedmore takes the Nocturnes and Arrangements too seriously. They are merely first beginnings of pictures, differing from ordinary first beginnings in having no composition. The great originality was in venturing to exhibit them.

P. G. Hamerton, Academy.

19.—NOCTURNE

GREY AND GOLD—WESTMINSTER BRIDGE

Lent by The Hon. Mrs. Percy Wyndham.

Two of Mr. Whistler's "colour symphonies"—a "Nocturne in Blue and Gold," and a "Nocturne in Black and Gold." If he did not exhibit these as pictures under peculiar and, what seems to most people, pretentious titles, they would be entitled to their due meed of admiration (*sic!*). But they only come one step nearer pictures than delicately graduated tints on a wall paper do.

He must not attempt, with that happy, half-humorous audacity which all his dealings with his own works suggests, to palm off his deficiencies upon us as manifestations of power.

The Daily Telegraph.

20.—NOCTURNE

BLUE AND GOLD—SOUTHAMPTON WATER

Lent by Alfred Chapman, Esq.

There is always danger that efforts of this class may degenerate into the merely tricky and meretricious; and already a suspicion arises that the artist's eccentricity is somewhat too premeditated and self-conscious.

The Graphic.

21.—BLUE AND SILVER

BLUE WAVE—BIARRITZ

Lent by Gerald Potter, Esq.

Mr. Whistler is possessed of much audacity and eccentricity, and these are useful qualities in an artist who desires to be talked about. When he comes out into the open, and deals with daylight, we find these studies to be only the first washes of pictures. He leaves off where other artists begin. He shirks all the difficulties ahead, and asks the spectator to complete the picture himself.

The Daily Telegraph.

The absence, seemingly, of any power, such as the great marine painters had, of drawing forms of water, whether in a broad and wind-swept tidal river or on the high seas

F. Wedmore, Nineteenth Century.

22.—ARRANGEMENT IN BLACK AND BROWN.

MISS ROSA CORDER

Lent by Graham Robertson, Esq.

It is bad enough, in all conscience, to be caricatured by the gifted pencil and brushes of the admirable Whistler; and it is surely adding insult to injury to describe the victims and sufferers as "Arrangements." With regard to Mr. Whistler's Symphonies, Harmonies, and so on, we will relate a parable. Here it is:—A lively young donkey sang a sweet love song to the dawn, and so disturbed all the neighbourhood, that the neighbours went to the donkey and begged him to desist. He continued his braying for some time, and then ended with what appeared, to his own ears, a flourish of surpassing brilliancy.

"Will you be good enough to give over that hideous noise?" said the neighbours.

"Good Olympus!" said the donkey, "did you say hideous noise? Why, that is a 'Symphony,' which means a concord of sweet sounds, as you may see by referring to any dictionary."

"But," said the neighbours, "we do *not* think that 'Symphony' is the word to describe your performance. 'Cacaphony' would be more correct, and that means 'a bad set of sounds.'"

"How absurdly you talk!" said the donkey. "I will refer it to my fellow-asses, and let them decide."

The donkeys decided that the young donkey's song was a most symphonious and harmonious, sweet song; so he continues to bray as melodiously as ever. There is, we believe, a moral to this parable, if we only knew what it was. Perhaps the piercing eye of the "*Nocturnal Whistler*" may find it out.

The Echo.

Miss Rosa Corder, and Mr. Irving as Philip are two large blotches of dark canvas. When I have time I am going again to find out which is Rose and which is Irving.

The rest of the collection marred by the impatience which has prevented his achieving any finished work of Art.

Weekly Press.

23.—"HARMONY IN GREY AND GREEN"

PORTRAIT OF MISS ALEXANDER

Lent by W. Alexander, Esq.

A sketch of Miss Alexander, in which much must be imagined.

Standard.

There is character in it, but it is unpleasant character. Of anything like real flesh tones the painting is quite innocent.

Builder.

But what can we say of Mr. Whistler? His portrait of Miss Alexander is certainly one of the strangest and most eccentric specimens of Portraiture we ever saw. If we were unacquainted with his singular theories of Art, we should imagine he had merely made a sketch and left it, before the colours were dry, in a room where chimney sweeps were at work. . . . Nobody who sets any value upon the roses and lilies that adorn the cheeks of our blooming girls can accept such murky tints as these as representative of a young English lady.

Era.

It is simply a disagreeable presentment of a disagreeable young lady.

Liverpool Weekly Mercury.

Mr. Whistler again appears on the walls with a characteristic full length life size portrait of a girl, Miss Alexander.

This work is devoid of colour, being arranged in Black and White and intermediate tones of grey. The general effect is dismal in the extreme, and one cannot but wonder how an artist of undoubted talent should wilfully persist in such perversities of judgment.

Western Daily Mercury.

Miss Alexander, almost in Black and White, and about the most unattractive piece of work in the Galleries.

Edinburgh Daily Review.

A "gruesomeness in Grey."

Well, bless thee, J. Whistler! We do not hanker after your brush system. Farewell!

Punch.

"An Arrangement in Silver and Bile."

The artist has represented this bilious young lady as looking haughty in a dirty white dress, a grey polonaise, bound by a grey green sash, a grey hat, with the most unhealthy green feather; furthermore, she wears black shoes with green bows, and stands defiantly on a grey floor cloth, opposite a grey wall with a black dado. Two dyspeptic butterflies hover wearily above her head in search of a bit of colour evidently losing heart at the grey expanse around. . . . A picture should charm, not depress, it should tend to elevate our thoughts!

Society.

This picture represents a child of ten, and is called a harmony in grey and green, but the prevailing tone is a rather unpleasant yellow, and the complexion of the face is wholly unchildlike.

Echo.

A large etching in oil, a "Rhapsody in Raw Child and Cobwebs," by Mr. Whistler.

The Artist.

Mr. Whistler is as spectral as ever in an unattractive portrait of an awkward little girl, happily not rendered additionally ridiculous by a musical title.

Bedford Observer.

Flattery is objectionable in art as elsewhere, but some portrait painters seem to find it impossible to tell the truth without being rude.

The Academy.

Mr. Whistler has a portrait of a young lady that excites absolute astonishment.

What charm can there be in such colours as these? What effect do they produce which would not have been better by warmer and less repulsive tints?

Leeds Mercury.

Mr. Whistler's single contribution is a child's portrait, posed and painted in a rather distant, if obsequious, imitation of the manner of Velasquez, the great difference being that whereas the Spaniard's work is most remarkable for supreme distinction, the present portrait is uncompromisingly vulgar.

The Magazine of Art.

24.—NOCTURNE

BLUE AND SILVER—BOGNOR

Lent by Alfred Chapman, Esq.

We protest against those foppish airs and affectations by which Mr. Whistler impresses on us his contempt of public opinion. In landscape he contributes what he persists in calling a Nocturne in "Blue and Silver," and a Nocturne in "Black and Gold," which is a mere insult to the intelligence of his admirers. It is very difficult to believe that Mr. Whistler is not openly laughing at us.

Pall Mall Gazette.

25.—NOCTURNE

BATTERSEA REACH

Lent by Alfred Chapman, Esq.

Under the same roof with Mr. Whistler's strange productions is the collection of animal paintings done by various artists for the proprietors of the *Graphic*, and

very refreshing it is to turn into this agreeably lighted room and rest on comfortable settees whilst looking at "Mother Hubbard's Dog," or the sweet little pussy cats in the "Happy Family."

Liverpool Courier.

A few smears of colour, such as a painter might make in cleaning his paint brushes, and which, neither near at hand nor far off, neither from one side nor from the other, nor from in front, do more than vaguely suggest a shore and bay, was described as a Note in Blue and Brown. . . . One who found these pictures other than insults to his artistic sense could never be reached by reasoning.

Knowledge.

26.—BLUE AND GOLD

CHANNEL

Lent by Alfred Chapman, Esq.

27.—PINK AND GREY

CHELSEA

Lent by Cyril Flower, Esq., M.P.

. . . of the insolent madness of that school of which Mr. Whistler is the most peccant—we wish we could say the only—representative.

Knowledge.

28.—NOCTURNE

BLUE AND GOLD—VALPARAISO

Lent by Alexander Ionides, Esq.

"A Nocturne" or two by Mr. Whistler—and here we have it in the usual style—a daub of blue and a spot or two of yellow to illustrate ships at sea on a dark night, and a splash and splutter of brightness on a black ground to depict a display of fireworks.

Norwich Argus.

29.—GREEN AND GREY
THE OYSTER SMACKS—EVENING

Lent by Alexander Ionides, Esq.

Other people paint localities ; Mr. Whistler makes artistic experiments.

The Academy.

30.—GREY AND BLACK
SKETCH

Lent by Alexander Ionides, Esq.

31.—BROWN AND SILVER
OLD BATTERSEA BRIDGE

Lent by Alexander Ionides, Esq.

Nor can I imagine anyone acquainted with Mr. Whistler's works speaking of any of them as "completed."

Letter to Pall Mall.

32.—NOCTURNE
BLACK AND GOLD.

33.—SYMPHONY IN WHITE, No. II.
THE LITTLE WHITE GIRL

Lent by Gerald Potter, Esq.

Another picture, "The Little White Girl," was exhibited about the same time, containing the germ of that paradoxical Whistlerian humour lately so fully exemplified in various places about London. It was called "A Little White Girl" in the catalogue, and yet its colour generally was grimy grey.

London.

The white girl was standing at the side of a mirror, where the laws of incidence and refraction would unfortunately not permit her to see her own beauty.

Merrie England.

34.—NOCTURNE

BLUE AND SILVER—CREMORNE LIGHTS

Lent by Gerald Potter, Esq.

I have expressed, and still adhere to the opinion, that these pictures only come one step nearer than a delicately tinted wall paper.

The Art Critic of "The Times." Evidence at Westminster, Nov. 16th, 1878.

Paintings, like some of the "Nocturnes," and some of the "Arrangements," are defended only by a generous self-deception, when it is urged for them that they will be famous to-morrow because they are not famous to-day.

Nineteenth Century.

35.—GREY AND SILVER

CHELSEA WHARF

Lent by Gerald Potter, Esq.

36.—GREY AND SILVER

OLD BATTERSEA REACH

Lent by Madame Coronio.

37.—BLUE AND SILVER

He has no atmosphere and no light. Instead of air he studies various kinds of fog—and his "values" are the relative powers of darkness, not of light. He never paints a sky.

Merrie England.

38.—NOCTURNE

BLUE AND GOLD—ST. MARK'S, VENICE

Lent by Monsieur Gallimard.

"The mannerism of Canaletto is the most degraded that I know in the whole range of art. . . .

". . . . It gives no one single architectural ornament, however new—so much form as might enable us even to guess at its actual one; and this I say not rashly, for I shall prove it by placing portions of detail accurately copied from Canaletto side by side with engravings from the daguerreotype.

". . . . There is *no* stone drawing, *no* vitality of architecture like Prout's."

Prof. Ruskin, Art Teacher.

In Mr. Whistler's productions one might safely say that there is no culture.

A thenæum.

Imagine a man of genius following in the wake of Whistler!

Oracle.

The measure of originality has at times been overrated through the innocent error of the budding amateur, who in the earlier stage of his enlightenment confuses the beginning with the end, accepts the intention for the adequate fulfilment, and exalts an adroit sketch into the rank of a permanent picture.

*F. Wedmore.**"Four Masters of Etching."*

39.—CREPUSCLE IN OPAL

Lent by Fred. Jameson, Fsq.

Mr. Whistler is eminently an "Impressionist." The final business of art is not with "impressions." We want not "impressionists but expressionists," men who can say what they mean because they know what they have heard.

We want not always the blotches and misty suggestions of the impressionist, etc.

The Artist.

40.—HARMONY IN FLESH COLOUR AND GREEN

THE BALCONY

Lent by John Carafy, Esq., M.D.

It is perhaps a little difficult for any critic to be quite absolutely just to Mr. Whistler at present, on account of his eccentricities and his apparent determination to make us forget the qualities of the artist in our amusement at the freaks and fancies of the man.

P. G. Hamerton, in "The Academy."

A Variation in Flesh Colour and Green. The damsels—they were not altogether meritorious. The draughtsmanship displayed in them was anything but "searching."

F. Wedmore.

At about the same time the artist exhibited other sketches (we ask indulgence for the word) of a like character, notes of impressions of white dresses, furniture, balconies, and incidental faces and figures.

Merrie England.

The "evolution principle" has been visibly in operation for a dozen years or so in the successive Whistler's put before the public during that time. First of all we remember pictures of ladies pale and attenuate poring with tender interest on vermilion scarfs. The taint of realism was on them, but even in them were hints of the pensive humour that was to fetch mankind in the well-known "arrangements" at a later time. A good deal was left to the spectators imagination even in them.

London.

We note his predilections for dinginess and dirt.

Weekly Press.

41—ARRANGEMENT IN BLACK

LA DAME AU BRODEQUIN JAUNE

All these pictures strike us alike.

They seem like half-materialised ghosts at a spiritualistic *séance*. I cannot help wondering when they will gain substance and appear more clearly out of their environing fog, or when they will melt altogether from my attentive gaze.

Echo.

He has placed one of his portraits on an asphalted floor and against a coal-black background, the whole apparently representing a dressy woman in an *inferno* of the worldly.

Merrie England.

Mr. Whistler has a capricious rendering of a lady dressed in black, in a black recess, on a dark green floor. She is turning affectedly half-round towards the spectators as she buttons the *gant de suède* upon her left hand, *etc., etc.* Its obvious affectations render the work displeasing.

Morning Advertiser.

42.—ARRANGEMENT IN GREY AND BLACK

THOMAS CARLYLE

Lent by The Corporation of Glasgow.

The purchase of this picture is a form of hero-worship which would certainly not have received the approbation of Carlyle.

. . . This very doubtful masterpiece—unhappy ratepayers of Glasgow.

Dundee Advertiser.

. . . and to have recorded on a doleful canvas the head and figure of Carlyle. . . .

F. Wedmore.

. . . The rugged simplicity of Mr. Carlyle . . .
to have painted these things alone—however strange
their mannerism or incomplete their technique.

Nineteenth Century.

The portentous purchase by the civic authorities of Mr. Whistler's senile Carlyle renders it necessary for that section of the community who are not enamoured of Impressionism to watch with some vigilance the next steps taken by that body towards the formation of the permanent collection.

A portrait which omits entirely to bring out the individuality of the sitter, stands but little chance of recognition even from immediate posterity.

Letter to Glasgow Herald,
March 4, 1892.

We cannot forget his encounter some years ago with Mr. Ruskin, nor the contemptuous terms in which that foremost of art critics denounced his work. It has been left to Glasgow to rectify Mr. Ruskin's blunder in this matter, and it vindicates the merits of the American artist over whose artistic vagaries—his nocturnes and harmonies in blue and gold—the *whole press of Britain* made merry.

Dundee Advertiser.

There is, among portraits of great writers, Mr. Whistler's portrait of Carlyle. It is a picture whose story is complete, whose honours have been gathered abroad—in Paris, in Brussels, in Munich. Its destiny has been accomplished; it belongs to the City of Glasgow, and from the corporation of that city was borrowed for the Victorian Exhibition. The corporation lent it in good faith; the borrowers have treated it with all the indignity it is in their power to bestow on it.

Could there be a better epitome of the recent history of art in England. One work of Mr. Whistler's is received with high honour in the Luxembourg on its way to the Louvre; and at that very moment another work of his, worthy to rank with the first, is hoist with equally high disrespect to the ceiling of a gallery in London.

N. Y. Tribune, Jan. 17, 1892.

43.—HARMONY IN PINK AND GREY

PORTRAIT OF LADY MEUX

Lent by Sir Henry Meux.

"Portrait of Mrs. Meux, in which it was not so much the face as the figure and the movement that came to be deftly suggested, if hardly elaborately expressed."

F. Wedmore.

All Mr. Whistler's work is unfinished. It is sketchy. He no doubt possesses artistic qualities, and he has got appreciation of qualities of tone; but he is not complete, and all his works are in the nature of sketching. *The Art Critic of "The Times."* *Evidence at Westminster,* Nov. 16th, 1878.

44.—ARRANGEMENT IN GREY AND BLACK

PORTRAIT OF THE PAINTER'S MOTHER

Photograph of Picture.

This canvas is large and much of it vacant.

A dim, cold light fills the room, where the flat, grey wall is only broken by a solitary picture in black and white; a piece of foldless, creaseless, Oriental flowered crape hangs from the cornice. And here, in this solemn chamber, sits the lady in mournful garb. The picture has found few admirers among the thousands who seek to while away the hours at Burlington House, and for this result the painter has only to thank himself.

The Times.

"Arrangement in Grey and Black: Portrait of the Painter's Mother," is another of Mr. Whistler's experiments.

It is not a picture, and we fail to discover any *object* that the artist can have in view in restricting himself almost entirely to black and grey.

The Examiner.

The "arrangement" is stiff and ugly enough to repel many.

The Hour.

Before such pictures as the full-length portraits by Mr. Whistler, critic and spectator are alike puzzled. Criticism and admiration seem alike impossible, and the mind vacillates between a feeling that the artist is playing a practical joke upon the spectator, or that the painter is suffering from some peculiar optical delusion. After all, there are certain accepted canons about what constitutes good drawing, good colour, and good painting, and when an artist deliberately sets himself to ignore or violate all of these, it is desirable that his work should not be classed with that of ordinary artists.

The Times.

"He that telleth a tale to . . . Carlyle's
majority speaketh to one, in slumber: when
he hath told his tale he will say, What is
the matter?"

RESUMÉ.

It is impossible to take Mr. Whistler seriously.

Advertiser.

A combination of circumstances has, within the last year or two, brought the name and work of Mr. Whistler into special publicity. . . .

At the Grosvenor Gallery the less desirable of his designs aroused the inconsiderate ire of a man of genius and splendid authority.

If it be Mr. Whistler's theory that that which all the world of greatest artists (?) has mistaken for mere means has been in very seriousness the end, then the aim of Art is immeasurably lowered! . . .

If there be anything to the point, it is to implore us to take a stone for bread, and the grammar of a language in place of its literature.

Mr. Whistler has assumed that it is only the painter who is occupied with art. . . . Unless he is a very exceptional man. . . . If he is not of the school of Fulham, he is of the school of Hall and Park, or of the Grove End Road.

Has he, like Mr. Ruskin, devoted thirty years of a poet's life to the Galleries of Europe?

Has he, like Diderot, inquired curiously into the meaning and message of this thing and that? And *appreciating Greuze*, been able to *appreciate Chardin*? (!!)

Nineteenth Century.

Mr. Ruskin's whole body of doctrine, from the very young days in which he took the duty of teacher on to his old age, was contradicted by Mr. Whistler's pictures.

Merrie England.

In painting his success is infrequent, and it is limited.

In painting Mr. Whistler is an impressionist. His best painting betrays something of that almost modern sensitiveness to pleasurable juxtapositions of delicate colour which we admire in Orchardson, in Linton, (sic!) and in Albert Moore; it betrays, sometimes, as in a portrait of Miss Alexander, a deftness of brushwork in the wave of a feather, in the curve of a hat . . . and of high art qualities it betrays not much besides.

It is true that the originality of his painted work is somewhat apt to be dependent on the innocent error that confuses the beginning with the end, accepts the intention for the execution, and exalts an adroit sketch into the rank of a permanent picture.

F. Wedmore.

"Four Masters of Etching."

"I think Mr. Whistler had great powers at first, which he has not since justified."

Mr. Jones, R.A., Evidence in Court,

November 16, 1878.

The right time and the right place for the conspicuousness of an Impressionist were undoubtedly England, and the moment when Mr. Whistler rose up and astonished her. In Paris he was one of many, though he would be at peace in France, that peace would not be unattended with a certain comparative obscurity. Inconspicuous solitude would not have had the same charms for him.

Merrie England.

Au musée du Luxembourg, vient d'être placé, de M. WHISTLER, le splendide *Portrait de M^{me} Whistler mère*, une œuvre destinée à l'éternité des admirations, une œuvre sur laquelle la consécration des siècles semble avoir mis la patine d'un Rembrandt, d'un Titien ou d'un Vélasquez.

Chronique des Beaux-Arts.

MORAL.

Modern *British* (!) art will now be represented in the National Gallery of the Luxembourg by one of the finest paintings due to the brush of an *English artist* (!), namely, Mr. Whistler's portrait of his mother.

Illustrated London News



